2: Adams E-4,5 (1970-1971) 1973 SR9 Carib SR9
(1932-1971) Barama River

*177 independent of regular contact with regional transportation and
175 communication.
439

Nevertheless, the relationships Baird established during this period are critical to our analysis. Over the years, he clearly became the middleman through whom a local economy interfingered with
175 the regional economy. He supplied limited employment opportunities
*177 and market outlets. Thus, a number of Amerindians left aside sub-
464 sistence farming and depended on the wage work he provided. Others sought occasional employment, and still others supplied provisions for those engaged in mining activities. All of this had an important impact on the Amerindian population.

*177 In effect, Baird became a patron of Amerindian clients. As such,
175 he was subsequently the person through whom government services were
• 466 introduced and government support was elicited. During the later
659 years of Baird's gold mining activities, government health care was first introduced. The support elicited was a call for Amerindian votes. Eventually, when Baird gave up mining, he assumed an official role as government employee. His position as the broker controlling access to the Amerindians in the Upper Barama was clearly underscored by the missionary attempt to establish a similar relationship.

Missionaries

175 The Pilgrim Holiness Church Corporation is a fundamentalist
*177 organization based in the midwestern United States. They have been
997 active in Guyana at least since the early 1920's. Their early activities were on the coast and later expanded into the interior.

*177 195 464 laborers from the coast. A 1953 list of Baird's workers at Millionaire includes a mechanic, engineer, manager, foreman, and twenty-six laborers from the coast. Coastal workers still predominanted a year later when they held a strike for higher wages. They were granted their request. A few years later, other coastal workers held a second strike. By this time, a number of Carib men were in steady employment. With this reserve of local laborers, the coastal men were sent away. Manganese operations were opening up at Matthew's Ridge and these coastal men went there.

This reliance on Carib manpower was accomplished gradually. Many Carib men were anxious about working in the mine shaft. However, in time, Caribs gained confidence and skills and eventually totally replaced miners from the coast. Permanent employment was available for a core of workers. Jobs were available to others with changes in production or with the undertaking of special projects such as the road built between the air strip and In Time in 1964. At the height of his activities in the middle 1960's, Baird employed about fifty Carib men. At the time, this was a little less than fifty percent of the adult male Carib population. Later, Baird cut to thirty-two workers before finally phasing out his mining enterprise. In contrast to previous employment opportunities which briefly separated a man from his subsistence schedule, these mining opportunities with Baird resulted in a very different routine among the Carib men.

[241] [466] Specifically, Amerindians at the mine eventually left aside subsistence farming. Baird imposed a work schedule on a weekly calendar. The more permanent day work was from 6:30 to 11:00 in the morning and

from 12:30 to 4:00 in the afternoon, Monday through Saturday. Over time, salaries varied. During the last years of the company, men were usually paid about $4 a day. At this time, men also earned the equivalent of $4 a day for job work for which the terms were more flexible. Considerable inputs of human labor were included in all aspects of mining activities; cutting loggings, feeding a ball mill, turning a winch, shoving a wheelbarrow and so forth. When operations were of such a nature that the shaft had to be continually pumped of water, shifts worked around the clock. During these times, if a worker failed to come, Baird would take his place. As a standard procedure, Baird would suspend a worker for two weeks if he failed to turn out for a scheduled work period. In the Upper Barama River area, remote from transportation and communication networks, the need for a reliable labor force was thus stepped up with an increased industrialization of the mining enterprise.

Baird had a need for a limited number of workers, but increasingly, he needed workers who were experienced, dependable, and could be called out for any emergency or change in work schedule. On the other hand, permanent workers, without any other immediate subsistence resources on which to rely, sought assurance of job security. Throughout the existence of the mining enterprise, there were fewer jobs available than men wishing to be employed.[1] A situation was promoted in which Baird and the Carib workers made mutual demands, characteristic of the generalized but asymmetrical economic reciprocity conveyed in the personal relationships between a patron and his clients.

*177 175 466 [484] Baird further sought to secure Carib clients with special benefits. He tended to the emergencies of his workers and their families day and night. From time to time, Baird made trips to Georgetown possible by allowing workers to ride one way free on the charter flights which [891] left the air pool and later the air strip empty. In 1966, he started the first school. It was built at In Time and staffed by a teacher Baird privately paid.

*177 175 443 43 [434] Baird's trade store was operated primarily as a service for the workers. Local provisions were bought and sold at the same price. This policy was used also with many foods flown in from Georgetown. The thirty-two or more workers who earned about $4 a day had an income of approximately $1200 a year. As these workers had only small gardens and their wives and other members of their households enjoyed a great deal of leisure, most provisions were purchased. Cassava bread, the staple, sold for 16¢ a disk which is about a half inch thick and two feet in diameter. Local fish and meat sold for about 40¢ a pound. Rice, sugar, salt fish, canned milk, tinned sardines, and other foods were available. The store stocked a variety of implements for hunting, fishing, farming, and doing household chores. It also stocked cigarettes, matches, soap, cloth lengths, and manufactured clothes. Baird [452] extended each worker up to $100 credit and arranged special purchases. These included guns[2] and radios. One Carib man bought a portable, [454] manually operated Singer sewing machine in this manner. As there was no opportunity for investment, a worker would hide away somewhere about his house any cash he did not immediately use to make purchases.

000 *177 241 *179 464 returned to rain forest subsistence. There was no household without a large farm, but it was some time before new farms became productive. In addition, all of the Carib men were anxious to gain some money income to buy commercial items they had come to consider a need. However, there were few employment opportunities and the demand for [182] [361] local products was very limited. Although maintaining a subsistence relationship to the rain forest, the population nucleated around the air strip as much as possible to make use of the few remaining resource opportunities, including health care, food programs at the school, and whatever was available by way of casual wage work.

More men sought work than that available. Government station hands were hired. Work involved carpentry, cutting grass, filling water tanks during the dry seasons and other tasks. For a time, four men had these jobs. By spring 1971, only one man was left in this employment. Also, occasionally men were hired on project work, including stumping out areas, lopping down secondary bush at the extreme ends of the air strip, and building a clinic under one of the government residence houses. [465] The pay for this work was about $4 a day, and [466] the work schedule was from 6:30 A.M. to 2:30 P.M., allowing the men time to farm or hunt during daylight hours.

Baird's private activities also entailed some employment opportunities. He was considering a partnership which would take him to the Potaro River for gold mining. He made a three week prospecting trip there in November 1970 and took along six of his former workers.

Other opportunities for work at the Air Strip involved carrying loads for the Medical Ranger and the Agricultural Field Assistant.

broker between them. At times, rivalry was evident when a worker had been suspended for two weeks, as was the standard practice for failure to turn out for a scheduled work period. The suspended man would have his wife make a batch of cassiri, and he would hold a spree for other miners who often suspected the plot but could not resist the invitation. In turn, the guests would be too inebriated to work, and the first miner would be immediately reinstated as constant workers were needed to maintain the mining enterprise.

From the pattern of social organization attending subsistence farming in the rain forest, father and son and father and son-in-law ties have been solidified by strategies to secure employment. In this case, previous nuclear families with ties of assistance among a wider kin group, effective organization for exploiting the bush, were changed by the circumstances of the availability of employment. However, the record of impermanence regarding work opportunities and other markets has contributed to a general lack of explicitness regarding work partnerships and residential practices among the Upper Barama River Carib population during the last forty years. The organization of the population with no access to steady mining employment also has been affected by the increased availability of regional exchange opportunities. This is best detailed in the discussion of the situation during 1970-71.

Resettlement around Baramita Air Strip

The current residence situation among the Upper Barama River Carib population has resulted from the pattern described by Gillin,